

*The EMIE BULLETIN is published quarterly.*

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The 2007 American Library Association Midwinter Conference was held in Seattle in the beautiful northwest of our nation, January 19–24. What an awe-inspiring site for our EMIERT Executive Board and All-Committee Meetings, both held on Sunday, January 21, 2007.

Members of the EMIERT Executive Board had had a conversation in New Orleans in the summer of 2006 about the timing of EMIERT events at the annual conferences. Board members expressed their concerns that attendance was disappointingly small at many well-planned programs and events, since consecutive EMIERT-sponsored events were often scheduled either at the same time or many city blocks apart. This situation is exacerbated by the fact that many members can only afford to attend the annual conference for a day and would not be able to attend EMIERT-sponsored events on the days they could not attend.

One idea that was warmly accepted was that EMIERT programs should all occur on the same day and in the same locale so that members could make plans to attend all EMIERT events, even if they are limited to one day's attendance, and it would not be necessary to traverse an entire conference city to attend consecutive EMIERT events. The board came up with the slogan "Sunday is EMIERT day!" to emphasize our commitment to planning a full day of EMIERT-sponsored events in the same locale for future ALA annual conferences. At Midwinter 2007 in Seattle the EMIERT Executive Board's planning session continued in this vein. A sense of renewal and commitment came through strongly in our deliberations.

The EMIERT Board concurred that the major program for the 2007 ALA Conference in Washington, D.C., will be offered in a four-hour block on Sunday morning from 8:00 or 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 or 12:30 p.m. The theme of the conference will be "Libraries, Immigrants, and the American Experience." This theme will allow for various ethnic and minority groups to offer 30-minute presentations on how a particular minority or ethnic group has been helped by the American public library to acculturate, become citizens, and enjoy the benefits of being Americans. I will give a brief history of the American public library's services to help immigrants of various ethnic, minority, and national groups. Homa Naficy, Myra Appel, and I will be coordinating the program. A brief overview of the four-hour block (assuming 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.) would look like this:

The EMIERT Executive Board continually needs the ideas of the membership

8:00 – 8:30	Overview of American public library services with immigrants
8:30 – 9:00	Immigrant group I
9:00 – 9:30	Immigrant group II
9:30 – 10:00	Immigrant group III
10:00 – 10:15	Break
10:15 – 10:45	Immigrant group IV
10:45 – Noon	Questions/answers, possible book signings, handouts available, etc.

to keep us on target and to ensure that your needs are addressed. I urge all of you to sign up for the EMIERT listserv (EMIE-L@ala.org) so that together the EMIERT membership can share successes and accomplishments working with multicultural groups and pass along the good news to others dealing with similar problems and issues. For those of you who are looking for opportunities to serve and to get involved in EMIERT, please check out the EMIE Web site ([www.ala.org/emiert](http://www.ala.org/emiert)) as well as the EMIERT pages in the *ALA Handbook of Organization, 2006–2007*, to locate officers, chairs of committees, and representatives and liaisons.

This is our sixth quarterly issue of the *EMIE Bulletin* appearing as an insert in *MultiCultural Review (MCR)*. We are well into the second year of our productive collaboration with *MCR*. Since the *EMIE Bulletin* continues to serve as an important forum for spreading the good news to librarians and library advocates that EMIERT is here to help, the Executive Board in Seattle voted unanimously to continue EMIERT's agreement with the publishers of *MCR*. Having the *EMIE Bulletin* insert in *MCR* has been an indispensable way to let the library community know that EMIERT is the new home of the Coretta Scott King Committee, which sponsors the internationally acclaimed Coretta Scott King Book Awards.

I would like to remind all of you who have served as officers or committee chairs in EMIERT throughout its history to send EMIERT materials for the use of library historians and researchers to the ALA Archives, housed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. ALA Archives officials remind us that "it is each unit's responsibility to preserve the historical record of activities for future researchers by regularly transmitting unneeded archival materials to the ALA Archives in Urbana." Our founder emeritus, David Cohen, has collected and preserved EMIERT materials from EMIERT's beginning in 1972, when the Ethnic materials Information Exchange Task Force of the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) was founded. He is committed to getting these invaluable historical records to the ALA Archives. For more information on the ALA Archives and how you can get EMIERT materials there, see <http://web.library.uiuc.edu/ahx/ala/info.asp>.

Past EMIERT Chair and Nominating Committee Chair Victor Schill presented the following slate of officers for the 2007–09 biennium for approval by the Executive Board at Seattle. New officers for the 2007–09 biennium will begin their terms at the conclusion of the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. At the close of the 2007 Annual Conference, Myra Appel will become the EMIERT Chair for 2007–09, and I will assume my new duties as Past EMIERT Chair and Nominating Committee Chair for 2007–09. And so it goes!

The slate of candidates for EMIERT offices as approved by the EMIERT Executive Board are as follows:

Vice-Chair, Chair Elect, 2007–09: Homa Naficy  
Members at Large, 2007–09 (vote for two): Alan Bailey,  
Martin Goldberg, Linda Teel

To end my letter on a very upbeat note, I have great news! The ALA Executive Board met at 2007 Midwinter in Seattle to select ALA members for an ALA Honorary Membership. In August 2006, EMIERT members Toni Bissessar, Vladimir Wertsman, and I officially nominated David Cohen, founder emeritus of EMIERT, for an ALA Honorary Membership. We and all of the friends and colleagues of David Cohen anxiously awaited whether the ALA Council would be presented David's name as an Honorary Member. David's name was presented by the ALA Executive Board to the ALA Council. He was elected unanimously as an ALA Honorary Member. David has been notified by ALA of this honor. Friends from EMIERT and ALA have been sending cards and letters of congratulation to him. We are hoping to be able to get David to Washington, D.C., to receive this great honor in person! Those of you who have maintained close personal relationships with David are encouraged to explore options.

Always,  
Plummer Alston "Al" Jones, Jr., Chair, 2005–2007

# Recruiting a Multicultural Library Workforce: Rationale and Strategies

by Dr. Clara M. Chu (cchu@ucla.edu)  
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Studies of diversity recruitment efforts in the United States indicate that much work is still needed for the library and information profession to have a truly representative workforce. A review of the annual ALISE *Library and Information Science Education Statistical Report* shows some gains but, as noted by Adkins and Espinal (2004), there also have been some declines in recent years. Even more compelling data, providing evidence of the need to diversify the library and information profession, appear in the recently released study "Diversity Counts," by the American Library Association (ALA). This comprehensive study of gender, race, and age in the library profession analyzed 1990 and the most current available 2000 Census data, and found that the nearly 110,000 credentialed librarians were predominantly female, white, and middle-aged (45–54 years). The number of racial and ethnic minorities receiving accredited library master's degrees (MLIS) increased by 4 percent, from 9 percent in 1990 to about 13 percent in 2000. In examining the 2000 U.S. Census data, the study found:

- 11 percent of credentialed librarians were nonwhite compared to the general U.S. population, 25 percent of whom were nonwhite.
- 5 percent of librarians were African Americans while 12.3 percent of the U.S. population were African Americans.
- 2 percent were Latinos compared to 12.5 percent Latinos in the U.S. population.
- less than 1 percent of the profession was Native American compared to 0.9 percent of the population.
- 3 percent of the profession was Asian Pacific Islander compared to 3.7 percent of the population.
- Moreover, 15 percent of academic librarians were non white, making this category of librarians slightly more ethnically diverse than those in public and school libraries.

*Why recruit multicultural librarians (or librarians of color)?* is a question the answer for which should be evident not only by demographic data, but by what multicultural librarians offer to the profession and workplace. Although the provision of multicultural library services should be the responsibility of *all* library staff and library educators, ethnic minority librarians can enhance library and information services, and correspondently, ethnic minority library educators can enrich library education. They contribute as role models, introduce diversity to library practices, may already know a mi-

nority language, may have firsthand experience or be more familiar with the information needs and information-seeking behavior of their own communities, and have easier access to ethnic communities.

*How do we recruit for a more culturally diverse library professional workforce?* is a question I examined by reviewing the literature. Diversity recruitment in the library and information science (LIS) literature covers recruitment into the profession and into LIS education programs. It addresses the recruitment of culturally/ethnically/racially diverse individuals, or more broadly, those wishing to serve a culturally diverse community. The literature also ranges from "how-to" guides, descriptions of best practices, demographic surveys/reports, research and historical/status of diversity recruitment in the LIS field, and recruitment efforts that are focused on individuals from a young age to those who are pursuing second careers. The research has been performed by LIS students, professionals, educators, and stakeholders. Rather than an extensive literature review, here I wish to synthesize my readings, examination of best practices, and my experiences in diversity recruitment to propose strategies for the effective recruitment of culturally diverse librarians. These strategies require the efforts of librarians, educators, and counselors, among others, and they require initiatives starting with the very young, financial assistance, and an open perspective regarding the "academic" criteria for library school admission. More importantly, these strategies are grounded on the principle that all in society benefit from a culturally diverse library and information workforce/workplace, and that the work of diversity recruitment is challenging and requires perseverance.

1. Make available information (one-to-one, workshop, advertising, print, digital, etc.) about the profession: positions, salaries, work environments, education, skills.
2. Make available information about the education requirements and programs of study.
3. Promote the relevance of one's cultural background and linguistic knowledge to the library and information profession.
4. Accentuate the opportunity to work with and give back to community.
5. Recruit early, starting with school-age children.
6. Take a personal approach to recruitment; if possible, involve a librarian of color and faculty of color.
7. Recognize the importance of family and friends as

a support system, and engage them in the recruitment process.

8. Offer to mentor. Start by providing information about the profession and assistance in the application process to a library education program; make introductions to other professionals and library educators of all backgrounds; take recruits to ethnic and other library association meetings; and ensure continuity in the mentoring process throughout one's career.

9. Facilitate visits to library work sites and library education programs (personal tours, make referrals, facilitate appointments, introduce to library directors and library program recruiters, etc.).

10. Collaboratively recruit with academic/career counselors in K-12 and undergraduate education, and more particularly, with ethnic studies counselors.

11. Consider and become informed about diversity (sexual orientation, ethnicity vs. race, disabilities, international vs. immigrant or minority backgrounds, class, gender, etc.) within diversity, and broadening the concept of cultural diversity to include the concepts of transnationality and diaspora and experiences of multi-racial and multiethnic people, which reflect the dynamic of multicultural living and globalization.

12. Recruit by offering library assistant jobs or volunteer/internship opportunities in order for potential librarians to become familiar with library and information work.

13. Employ flexibility in admissions criteria; for example, in addition to academic performance measures, take into consideration community experience, cultural knowledge, language skills, and library experience, among other qualifications.

14. Offer scholarships and other financial assistance (loans, jobs, etc.).

15. Create an inclusive library education environment, including admitting a cohort that allows the creation of a support system, ethnic minority faculty, multicultural curriculum, flexible course schedule, flexible course delivery, internships, research and job opportunities, free access to technology, study space, academic and career advising, mentoring, and tutoring.

It should be noted that the provision of library services to culturally and linguistically diverse communities needs to be the responsibility of *all* library personnel. Thus, we also need to ensure that the following are in place:

- multicultural library education curricula
- multicultural library research
- cultural diversity library committees, policies, and action plans

Lastly, it should be recognized that recruitment only addresses the beginning of one's professional path; thus recruitment will not really have been successful without taking into account retention, placement, and pro-

motion. In summary, it is vital for the relevance and strength of the library profession to have a multicultural workforce in a world that is becoming even more diverse and globalized, in poor communities, and in those where a divide exists between rich and poor.

## References

Adkins, Denice and Espinal, Isabel. "The Diversity Mandate." *Library Journal*, April 15, 2004. [www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA408334.html?display=searchResults&text=di](http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA408334.html?display=searchResults&text=di)

American Library Association. "Diversity Counts" Press Release. October 12, 2006. [www.ala.org/ala/pressreleases2006/october2006/ALALibraryDiversityStudy.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/pressreleases2006/october2006/ALALibraryDiversityStudy.htm)

Davis, Denise M. and Hall, Tracie D. *Diversity Counts*. (rev. ed.) Chicago: Office for Research and Statistics, and Office for Diversity, American Library Association, January 2007. [www.ala.org/ala/ors/diversitycounts/DiversityCounts\\_rev07.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/ors/diversitycounts/DiversityCounts_rev07.pdf)

## Selected Resources

ALA Diversity Office: [www.ala.org/diversity/](http://www.ala.org/diversity/)  
*Recruitment information*: [www.ala.org/ala/diversity/divrecruitment/recruitmentdiversity.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/diversity/divrecruitment/recruitmentdiversity.htm)

*Recruitment (general)*: [www.ala.org/ala/education/recruitmentb/recruitment.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/education/recruitmentb/recruitment.htm)

*Resources for Prospective Graduate Students in Library and Information Studies*: [www.ala.org/ala/diversity/studentresources/studentresources.htm](http://www.ala.org/ala/diversity/studentresources/studentresources.htm)

The Diversity Librarians' Network  
[www.lib.utk.edu/residents/dln/](http://www.lib.utk.edu/residents/dln/)

• Bright, Kawanna, Chaudhuri, Jayati and Maud Mundava. "The Diversity Librarians' Network: Connecting, Sharing, Succeeding!" *Versed*, June 2005; p. 14. [www.ala.org/ala/diversity/versed/versedbackissues/may2005abcd/Versed\\_AC05\\_Web.pdf](http://www.ala.org/ala/diversity/versed/versedbackissues/may2005abcd/Versed_AC05_Web.pdf)

KLDivERS: Kentucky Libraries Diversity Education, Recruitment, and Support [www.kyvl.org/html/profession/kldivers.shtml](http://www.kyvl.org/html/profession/kldivers.shtml)

• KLDivERS is a place for librarians, library employees, and people interested in the information profession. You will find projects, recruitment opportunities such as events and conferences, scholarship and grant sources, education opportunities, and links to other resources of interest to Kentuckians in the library science field.

Reese, Gregory L. and Hawkins, Ernestine L. *Stop Talking Start Doing! Attracting People of Color to the Library Profession*. Chicago: ALA, 1999.

## Developing Culturally Diverse Collections for the 21st Century: Best Practices and Guidelines

The EMIERT Collection Development Committee is delighted to announce that Libraries Unlimited will publish *Developing Culturally Diverse Collections for the 21st Century: Best Practices and Guidelines*, an edited volume containing contributions from EMIERT members and other librarians noted for their expertise in building diverse collections. The book will address the needs of public, academic, and school librarians challenged by the issues and problems of developing and managing culturally diverse collections in an environment of stagnant budgets, a growing proliferation of free and fee-based electronic resources, rapid globalization, and the increasingly numerous constituencies who require and demand access to collections that meet their vernacular, educational, or recreational needs. Our goals include helping practitioners to articulate the issues and problems unique to building multicultural collections; developing criteria to support varied decision-making processes; identifying resources to assist institutions with the practical acquisition of materials in all formats; and providing ideas and suggestions for reaching creative alternatives or solutions to achieve institutional objectives. We anticipate also that the book, while not theoretical in nature, will nonetheless also offer library school students a solid basis for putting into practice the theory and foundation acquired in programmatic coursework and will stimulate discussion and further inquiry.

Topical chapters range from considering the basic aspects of collection building, collections assessments, and the crafting of collection development policies—each examined within the context of building culturally diverse collections—to the issues of censorship and the acquisition of materials that might be deemed controversial by segments of a library's user population. Oth-

er authors offer strategies and suggestions on building monographic and periodical collections and discuss the role of the small publishers in publishing much of the culturally diverse materials available in the marketplace. Within our libraries and our professional groups we often discuss the contemporary electronic environment, where so much content is available in digital format or freely accessible on the Internet; several chapters will speak to these issues and concerns with a focus on selecting commercial electronic sources and developing diversity in virtual collections. Other authors discuss ways to identify and acquire ethnic and culturally diverse materials available from publishers and vendors located outside North America and examine the challenges of collecting ephemeral materials or the gray literature typically not indexed or available for purchase. Collecting media, visual images, and publications on the performing arts is addressed in other chapters, as is developing collections from the growing volume of excellent children's ethnic and multicultural literature available in English and other languages. Included is a chapter on development, fund-raising, and grant support to supplement hard-pressed library budgets.

Projected to run from 250 to 300 pages, *Developing Culturally Diverse Collections for the 21st Century: Best Practices and Guidelines* will include bibliographies, lists of resources, and web sites. To maintain the vitality and current relevancy of the print publication, the Collection Development Committee plans to create a web-based list of resources and bibliographies that can be updated regularly and will add to the value of the print publication. The Collection Development Committee will keep EMIERT members informed about publication information.

### Crossing Boundaries with Children's Books

Edited by Doris J. Gebel

This annotated bibliography—organized geographically by world region and country, describing nearly 700 books representing 73 countries—is a valuable resource for librarians, teachers, and anyone else seeking to promote international understanding through children's literature. It is the third volume sponsored by the United States Board on Books for Young People. *Crossing Boundaries* includes international children's books published between 2000 and 2004, as well as selected American books set in countries other than the United

States. Editor Doris Gebel has compiled an important tool for providing stories that will help children understand our differences while simultaneously demonstrating our common humanity.

Doris J. Gebel is the head of Youth Services at the Northport–East Northport Public Library, New York, and has taught children's literature at the Palmer School of Library & Information Science in New York.